

Breaking the Fall

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Summary: sFresh and crisp; Noble Six has stepped into some shoes the others would rather have forgotten and thrown away. Will he eventually fit into them? Or will he get the demotion the others would want? A small retelling of the campaign.

1. Stepping In

Insert disclaimer

(Halo does not belong to said author; yatta yatta, yatta.)

* * *

><p>Every dent and bump on the road was made audible through the 'Hog's rough interior seating. Nothing could protect the occupants from feeling the unfair lashing of nature's makeshift path. Overhead, two Falcons roared with laughter as they soared past the vehicle. The driver of the Warthog made sure to end their mockery with the dust that arose from his ride's wheels; the Falcons roared ahead in displeasure.<p>

"You sure you don't wanna put your helmet on, lieutenant? We're having a pretty rough ride." said the driver. He was a fairly young Marine; having just the right amount of experience and time away from the more hardy veterans; the lieutenant suspected that in two years time, (if he lived long enough), that the Marine would eventually fall into the improper grammar the veterans always used. Hopefully, this would not happen.

The lieutenant shook their head in response as they fiddled with their said helmet. It was glowing in the musky light and had visible damages imprinted on the sides and front; the owner would have preferred nothing more or less.

Then finally, the Warthog came to an unsteady halt and screeched just

out of the Falcons' landing zone. The Marine took one last look at the Spartan beside him before saluting. "Here's your stop, sir." he announced, before equally swinging himself out of the jeep-like transport; and if the Spartan were to have payed close attention, would have heard the mumbled promises of the Falcons' pilots' deaths.

The Spartan quietly sighed as he sauntered past the armed birds. He ducked beneath one's tail and caught a glimpse of a Spartan-III cleaning their Sniper Rifle out. Not one paid much attention to the other and continued on with their way.

The first entered the temporary base, whilst the latter stayed at his position. The first Spartan's tracks were halted by a robotic arm. The lieutenant showed no surprise as his eyes landed heavily on the man sharpening his kukri blade; his helmet was practically screaming death with the skull etched on it.

"Commander." the voice was fresh and crisp; it came from the owner of the synthetic arm. Six watched as the woman came into his line of view, her profile being illuminated by the fluorescent light. She sported the average haircut, scarred skin, and an exotic accent.

"So that's our new Number Six." this time, it was a different man speaking. Instinctively, Six's eyes flickered over to the bulkier of the assorted Spartans. Clearly, he was not produced of the same cheaper augmentations Six's kind had gone through. 'Battle weary' was displayed on this man's face.

"Kat, you read his file?" Was it possible to be conversed about without being talked to directly? Six remained, however, quiet, and kept these thoughts locked up in his head. Trained to think first before risking one's life and/or rank, he kept his attention focused on the conversation.

The woman, Kat, replied, "Only the parts that weren't in black ink."

This time, Six had to forcefully keep his remark silent. He had seen what ONI had done to his file; all the censoring they did on his bio. Admittedly, Six was surprised that the said Kat had even bothered reading the blatant information leftover.

The only one who did not speak yet finally turned their attention back to Colonel Holland. Internally, Six felt curiosity spur into his system. Why would his newly appointed Commander waste time scrutinizing him now? Evidently, there were more pressing matters to take charge of rather than his appearance. The heavy silence that flanked the room was only disrupted by the conversation the two higher ups were having.

Subconsciously, Six tuned into this exchange of words before snapping into attention.

"Commander, sir." he stepped up as the chat session ended. Noble One nodded, his cynical eyes lowering to a respectable, ominous degree. Six, unlike him, boldly sized him up. At least for him, he had the coverage of his helmet; something his new Commander hadn't even bothered to use as of now.

"I'm Carter, Noble One. That's Kat, Noble Two; Emile and Jorge are Noble's Four and Five. You'll be riding with me, Six." he explained. The two emerged from the makeshift structure and entered Reach's gloomy atmosphere again; the blaring sounds of the Falcons' indicated that the Marine from earlier, had ****not**** gone out with his threat. This brought the slightest of comfort to Six; he would not have to face a briefing about their deaths after all.

"Now I'm not going to lie to you, lieutenant. You're stepping into some shoes that the rest of the team would rather leave unfilled," Carter paused as they boarded the mechanical birds. "As for me, I'm just glad to have Noble Team back to full power." Six barely glanced at the other Spartan that sat next to him.

"And by the way, I saw your file. Even the parts that ONI didn't want me to see. I'm glad to have your skill set, but that lone wolf stuff stays behind. Got it, lieutenant?" Carter questioned.

Six did not skip a heartbeat. "Yes sir." he replied. He had been expecting this draw of events. Anyone who was anyone would have instantly recognized that he, as a soldier, had never worked with another ally for longer than an hour or so. If he had, then they were likely to be dead now. He sensed a movement to his left; it was the final Spartan; Noble Three "Jun."

"Welcome to Reach." he greeted.

* * *

><p>On the latest note:_ this is part four of my Halo : Reach 'saga'. _

Yet I can assure any reader that they will not be forced to read the other installments.

No confusion should be instilled at all throughout this fanfiction.

Cheers,

FTAAee

2. Check It

Green.

The whole scenery around them was green; as Six's blanketed feet slammed the ground, they crushed some green too. The Spartan made little concern of the nutritional substance that clung onto his armor and followed the others down the hill and towards the distress beacon.

From the side of his peripheral vision, he spotted the lone skull-faced Spartan looking over the ground from a proud boulder. Whether it was because of the silence or for the sake of talking, the thin tension was disrupted by the oldest of them.

"See anything, Emile?" Jorge asked.

Six barely grasped the conversation being exchanged through the open COM, and focused primarily on getting to the beacon. Once they arrived at the spot, Six freely ventured further towards the next complex of buildings before being abruptly stopped by Jorge's gun.

Six did not talk, but merely, gave into the unsaid command; and turned back around to see Kat inspecting the beacon. When she was done with it, the thing was thrown carelessly aside; Carter instructed them to keep moving on.

"There's a lot of blood on the ground," Emile commented. He kicked aside a piece of debris from the smoking Warthog as his head shot towards the faint figure of his new comrade. If anything, he would've expected the newest edition to team to add his two cents in; but if his guessing was right, the new Six was anything but talkative â€" nevertheless, Emile always enjoyed a good challenge. He too, sped up his pace and followed Carter and the rest out of the still area.

"Permission to engage Commander?" Emile asked, loading his shotgun.

"Permission granted, but be selective," Carter especially threw a glance at him. "We don't need to telegraph our presence."

Emile scoffed at this. Noble One always acted like he would be the one doing the brash actions; Emile expected the leader to know better. Sure he was a bit reckless, but it wasn't like that trait had gotten him killed yet. If anything, he thought that Jorge, big old sentimental Jorge, was the one who always called the heedless moves.

Noble Six sighed as he pried his way through the ravaged house. How was one to keep quiet when his teammates persisted on their constant chattering? Turning a furniture over; there was nothing but overturned tables and scorched surfaces; noting that description in my field notes, he mentally wrote. Six decided to momentarily keep this new observation to himself and followed the rest of the team out of the place. Beside it was a boarded building, in which one man stumbled out of.

Six paid no heed to this, as Emile seemed very eager to lay out the welcoming carpet instead.

"Out of the house, now!"

And with an almost equally exasperated tone, Jorge ordered Emile to stand down. The Warrant Officer was reluctant to do so and let Jorge converse with the civilian. The others, with the exclusion of Kat and Carter, barely paid attention to this talk. Six was included with these few 'others', and stared blankly ahead.

"Something on your mind, Six?" Kat asked.

Startled out of his reverie, Six numbly nodded his head. "Just thinking." he replied. He made sure to turn his head away from Kat to dodge the questions forming in her head. This gesture went noticed by the said Spartan as she kept her words in her head and tuned back into Jorge's interrogation.

"_...said something in the fields." _Jorge was finishing up.

Kat loaded her Mag.

"_Killed his son."_

One quick glance at Carter told Six that he was already conversing with someone else on a private COM; another look at Kat told him that she was probably that other person. Another thing Six noticed was that tiny turn Kat's head did that made her look like she was gesturing towards him â€" Six had no doubt that he was the subject of their private talk. Another mumble to his front right told him that Emile had no incentive of their conversation either.

"Just what is this 'something'?" Carter's voice broke the surface of Six's thoughts. Though before any of them could reply, Jun's voice blared through their open COM unit; _"Be advised. I'm picking up heat readings in the next building ahead."
>

Checking to see if his DMR's ammunition was good, Six scanned over his weaponry to see if he was prepared for a sudden firefight. Judging by the amount he had, he expected to last for at least two to four waves of enemy intrusion before running out of ammo. And if that were to even happen, he could just pick up the foes' leftover guns. All isfair in love and _war_, right?

"Jorge tell them to get back in the building. Noble Team, double time." Carter's voice ordered.

So following the Commander's lead, Six raced across the bridge and hill, trailing just behind the first two Nobles; Emile was somewhere near his left while Jorge brought up the rear. In conclusion, it was a perfect formation that was brought to an end too quickly; Six carefully wandered into the building.

"Damn..." Carter's voice seemed to echo throughout the small room. Six momentarily glanced at the two corpses before looking onward into the next room. While Carter was busy transmitting the info to Jun, Six planned to make sure nothing else jumped out at them.

_Huh, _Six looked down on the floor, only noticing the barely visible_ claw-prints_ the killers had left behind. Wary, Six watched as Noble One silently swept into the next room. Orders were not needed to be given as the rest of the team followed in suit.

A loud _thump! _From the tin roofing triggered an injection of attentiveness into the group.

"What was that?" Emile's voice sounded from the COM. Six could clearly hear the loading of his shotgun as the two emerged into the courtyard. Carter continued on to stand by the tree whilst Six stared at the next entrance ahead. From his side view, he spotted quick movement from the East.

"Commander â€"

"Hold it till later, Six." he cut off.

"_Commander! Multiple heat signals ahead!_" Jun's voice shouted. Six barely grunted as he maneuvered into the rundown building. The lights were flickering, and as Six passed by the windows, he spotted a Skirmisher on top of a roof. Six felt the adrenaline triple as he switched his DMR for a magnum and shot two times; one to shatter the window, and the other to hit a perfect head shot on the Covenant warrior. Six proceeded to the basement, mechanically picking up the two grenades a dead Marine had dropped; he threw one at the clustered group of Covenant.

"_Hey, save some for me lieutenant." _Emile's voice crackled over the COM as he aimed at the grunts sprawling around the courtyard. Six remained at his position as the others rushed past him. Only Kat paused for a brief moment to check his vitals.

"Six?" she asked.

The called Spartan nodded his head and switched back to his .45 Mag. Handgun. Aiming high, he took out the rest of the Skirmishers in hiding. Jorge nodded his thanks to Six as they sprinted through the valley; the Covenant were everywhere.

Six pounced on a grunt and twisted its neck as he jumped onto the next one â€" shooting it between the eyes. Rays of plasma joyfully shattered his shield as he fought his way for cover. Pressing his back on the lone boulder, he reloaded his magnum; Six counted to five before charging back into the field â€" his shield back to full power.

Meanwhile, Kat exhaled a breath she didn't even know she held, and copied the same actions the new Six had done as well. When she read his file, she thought that the spook was just exaggerating about his skills; but now, as she saw Six in action, she was beginning to see what they meant.

Though suddenly, a stray bullet grazed the side of Kat's helmet and lodged into the unsuspecting Skirmisher behind her. It dropped dead, but only after she heard Emile's insinuating remark. Glancing at her savior, she returned her gaze to Noble Four. He was lucky that he couldn't see her threatening glare.

"Alright Noble, stand down." Carter's cool voice flooded into their helmets. From behind him, he spotted Jorge shifting irritably from foot to foot.

"_Stand down? It's the damn Covenant!" _he roared.

Emile snickered through the COM: "_Relax, big guy. This whole valley just turned into a free fire zone."_

Carter sighed: "Quit it. Jun? How are the skies?"

Like a child, Emile kicked a head out of his path and fumed about the Commander's killjoy attitude. As for Jorge, he was glad yet miffed all the same; he was happy that Emile had been told to shut down, but irritated at the fact that the Covenant were on Reach. _His Reach._

"_They just keep on coming, sir. There's a dropship north of your position." _

Carter mimicked Jun's exasperated tone: "Let's go Noble Team. Six?" The Spartan's head rose from his gun. There was something wrong with the cartridge for a new magazine wasn't fully able to insert itself into the device. "You got point."

But of course. Mentally sighing, Six decided to ignore the DMR's defect and quietly sprinted to the drop zone. The first thing he spotted was a huddled group of grunts which were easily dispatched by a grenade. The bigger problems lay ahead of them as a handful of Elites jumped out of the stacks of hay.

Six's helmet specifically viewed in closer to look for an opening; he concluded that the best way to get rid of them was to separate them. He threw his last grenade in the middle, hoping by some chance that it would stick to one, and watched as it obliterated the ground.

At this point, Jorge unleashed his heavy duty fire whilst the others dove for their targets. Carter and Kat opted for teamwork and flanked one Elite; Emile tackled one by his own; Six engaged another, and Jorge kept the last one running for cover.

In unison, the two enemies exhausted their guns at each other. When they both ran out, it was just a matter of time to see who refilled theirs first. Six let out a grunt as he struggled to revive his DMR; it was malfunctioning again.

The Elite seemed to roar derision at this as it attempted to slaughter Six with its needle rifle. Six grit his teeth as he dove inward and jumped to the right. Though, no matter where he went, the Elite's gun seemed to be positioned right there "expecting; waiting.

"Need some help?" Six watched in disbelief as Emile slit the Elite's neck from the back. Colored blood spurted from the wound as the alien choked to its death. Emile appeared to be grinning with satisfaction as he brought down his boot on its neck. Six nodded a thanks to him before running off to help the others.

No assistance was required.

"We need to warn Holland about this. I need you at that relay outpost now, Kat." said Carter as the team recovered from the recent firefight.

"Commander? I'm reading more hostile activity to the northeast."

"When don't you?" mumbled Emile. But if anyone had heard it, Carter especially, ignored him.

"Got it, Jun. Emile, you're with Kat. Five, Six, we'll run a ground interference and meet up at the outpost." Carter ordered.

Kat nodded, turned around, and contacted Jun: "Noble Three, requesting for airlift."

"Jorge, Six, the truck."

Six momentarily paused in his steps to watch the Falcon pick up its

comrades. The Covenant were on Reach? _UNSC is going to have hell when they hear about this one, _he thought, trudging down the hill. As he stepped into the driver's seat, he awaited for the others to come on board before stepping on the gas.

It was time he settled the score with the Covenant.

* * *

><p>On a note:

It is Valentine's Day.

So to all my readers, happy Valentine's Day!

I hope everyone liked this newest installment.

As I promised to myself, I tried to keep Six as ominous as I could.

And hopefully he was.

Cheers,

FTAaee

**Ps. **_I was told once, when I 'carelessly' forgot to put a disclaimer, to put one up._

And as you can see, I haven't put one up in this chapter either.

_Why? _

Well, it's a repetitive annoyance and I believe the site covers for all that copyrighted work, yes?

Yes.

3. Trying Bonds

All it took to be spotted was to lose composition and panic. Six noted this fact as he sped past the compound of Covenant and ran over the yellow armored Elite. Carter's rising question was silenced as he noticed the kill, and let Six have free roam with the truck; he backed up quickly into a forming group of grunts before jumping out and pursuing another Elite going into hiding.

Inspired, for he _really _couldn't believe he was_, _Carter jumped into the driver's seat and took care of the remaining grunts. As for the pair of jackals, Jorge easily took down their shields with his gun and let Carter run them over as they flickered off. Pleased at the quick work, Carter eased under the overhang and waited for Six's return.

The said Spartan arose from the dust that had blossomed inside the room and staggered into the passenger seat. His armor was decorated by flimsy blood and dust, masking its original color.

"_You alright there, Six?"_ Jorge questioned as Carter drove on in silence.

The Spartan nodded his head, keeping his silent composure a mystery to the other two. And it did not suit either passenger and driver fine. Noble Team had all reviewed his files; Carter letting slip that the new Six would be quiet and impassive. So they knew they were dealing with a silent member â€" possibly another Jun. But putting all conflicting emotions aside, they expected to at least have the new member try and meet them half way. Not vice versa.

As for the rest of the drive, it was silent until they reached another compound. Six heard Jorge curse behind him as he shot at the grunts scattered ahead. The rain of bullets whizzing past his head brought no comfort, as Six would have preferred to have taken care of them himself. The truck veered into the bridge and brought him out of his grumblings.

Jumping out, Six prepped his newly acquired plasma rifle in one hand. It made twice the better damage against enemies and was easier to handle, but that just didn't fix Six's distaste for the weapon. So with Carter and Jorge taking the blunt route to the enemy, Six planned to flank them out from the left.

Bringing the plasma rifle into position, Six sprinted into the condensed hallway and assassinated two grunts from the back. Their friends, momentarily lost, finally set their eyes upon him and unleashed a heavy torrent of plasma. Six dove to the side and returned the favor with his Mag.

"_Commander, I'm picking up a signal..."_The sound of Jun's voice was almost, always a constant reminder to Six that he wasn't alone anymore. As he always ventured away from the others during engagement, it was the only voice that kept him coming back to regroup with the rest of the team.

"Patch it through, Noble Three." Carter replied, watching Six appear from the corner. The Spartan made little effort to avoid stepping over the Elite he and Jorge had killed, and casually stood by for further orders.

"_Mayday, mayday! This is Three-Charlie-Six, we're under attack by Covenant forces. The Covenant are on Reach. I repeat: the Covenant are on Reach. Anybody out there?" _

Briefly, Six wondered if Carter was the type to abandon soldiers in trouble when a mission was being in the process of completion. He cast off Jorge's side comment and looked directly at the Commander. His poise had not changed, but in his next set of words, he sensed the rigid tone in them.

"Let's move, Six. We need to find the source of that distress signal." said Carter. The other two Spartans with him did not need a repeat of instructions as they hustled into the truck. As Six drove out of the outpost, Jun put his two cents in: "_With all due respect Commander, but search and rescue â€" rounding up strays â€" isn't necessarily our top priority here." _

Preforming three other roadkill wasn't quite troublesome to Six. Though admittedly, he did feel somewhat bad for the moa that had come

into the truck's course. Six continued driving, and hoped that Jun would just coincide with the Commander's decision.

"How many times do I have to say it? We do not leave anyone behind. Let me â€" "

"_I've got visual of possible friendly forces under attack just south of your position, sir." _Jun cut off.

Heaving a soft sigh, Six sharply turned left and avoided the possible detour he would have taken seconds ago.

"_Mayday! Mayday! We're under attack! We've got wounded here! I don't think we can hold out any longer!...Someone! Mayday! Mayday!" _

The settlement was a mess, and Six didn't even bother to register its distorted array as he stopped the truck in the middle of the Covenant's fire. He waited for his two passengers to get off before ramming the truck straight into the grunts. One flew overhead, and Six briefly smirked at the sickening crunch it made as it hit the truck.

He did a U-turn next and returned to the group once again. "Spartans?" one of the soldiers emerged from the shadows of cover.

"_Dropships," _he heard Carter mutter through the COM. In a louder tone he said, "Evac ships, keep your distance. Five and Six, keep the LZ Green when the drop ships come in."

"Corporal Travis, sir," said the previous soldier. He sported no major injury, but seemed just as shaken as any of the soldiers in his unit. "with Three Charlie, sir. It's the Covenant."

Carter nodded: "We know, Corporal. Get the wounded and survivors into cover. It's time to get you out of here."The soldier saluted in response and hurried off for cover; whether to warn or ward off any bystander, Six didn't wait to find out.

The roar of winds was almost deafening now, and Six reversed the truck out of the dropships' landing zone. There were two in total, and Six waited till both finished dumping their contents into the field before driving into it again. He hoped to catch whatever unlucky stray in the truck's path and crush them over. If not, he just hoped he got their attention long enough to distract them.

Six sharply turned back again to face the Covenant. There were multiple Grunts, a few Jackals, and one Elite charging to his location. Six plotted and took out a grenade. Unlike others, this one was special. He had made it into a mini-time bomb, and placed it on the passenger seat. (Something he composed in during his night shifts.) And stepping on the gas, he charged straight at the aliens; he jumped out of the vehicle two seconds before it exploded.

Barely dodging the remnants of the truck, Six felt two jabs to his back. He rose to a crouch and swiveled around to face his next victim. To bullets sent the Grunt's gas tank up into the air. _H â€" ?
>

Six cringed in pain as multiple needles pierced through his gauntlet. He counted his lucky stars to even be able to lift up his arm in time. For if he hadn't " Six was pretty sure he wouldn't be alive right now.

Glaring at the Spec-Ops Elite, Six jumped behind a large tree trunk and reloaded his Mag. He only had one magazine left, meaning he had eight bullets to spare before running out of long-ranged weapons. Six flinched as the charred bark was slowly being eaten away by the plasma shots. "Wait " plasma?"

Six chanced a peek and saw that not only had he attracted one Elite's attention, but "two. "Six cursed himself and decided that it was time to launch into action or face the risk of getting cornered. The lack of shooting in his particular area was nerve racking. Slowly rising up, he tackled the first Elite to the ground.

Kicking its weapon away, Six momentarily wrestled with the foreign creature as it roared for freedom. Six would have had it dead if not for its partner.

The Elite swung its heavy leg and launched Six into the bloody field ahead. He coughed and tried to purchase some air through his failing lungs. Only when he did, did the Elites continue charging at him. They were merciless as he was beaten with their ammunition. Six struggled to dodge their line of fire as he searched the ground for a gun. He spotted his magnum and took it.

"Eight bullets, "he thought. Eight bullets weren't enough to even deplete an Elite's shield. Six cursed as he realized he would have to get close and personal with the enemy. So Six jumped behind a rock and took cover. The Elites would not have any more of this cat and mouse chase, so they flanked him at an incredible speed.

It was a hurricane of purple and blue from there.

Six crouched and slid between one Elite's legs, kicking it over, he latched one arm around its neck as the other shot the magnum's ammo into its neck. The alien died and left its partner in a mask of red fury.

Six bounced off the corpse just as the Elite tried to pummel him dead. Swinging a fist at its turned head, Six's hand made contact. The alien staggered on its two feet, trying to grab a sense of balance, but Six would not have any of it. He picked up the needle rifle on the ground and continuously shot at the stupefied Elite. Having no mercy, Six used up all his ammo to deactivate its shield before jabbing the gun into its head; there was a gory crunch, and Six smirked in satisfaction.

"_Transport, LZ is clear. Move in for evac." _

The sudden opening in the COMs startled Six back to Reach. Tainted with blood, Six dismissively dusted the ones on his shoulder plates before heading into the opening. Jorge was the first one to spot him; the relief quite evident on his stance.

"Thought you went freelancing on us, Six." he said.

Six shrugged. "The plan just hit me." he replied quietly.

Jorge chuckled, "Literally by the looks of it." He had noted the blazing remains of the truck and the tire marks on some grunts. He had to hand it to the new recruit; Six was quite..._creative.

—

"Everyone get in, we'll be rendezvousing with Kat and Emile. Six?" the sudden open COM went private at this point. Six registered his acknowledgment by nodding towards Carter as he boarded the Falcon. _"Exactly _where _were you during the engagement?" he interrogated; his tone not leaving room for ignorance or arguments.

"_Just doing my job, sir."_ Six answered stiffly. And he was, if Carter hadn't noticed it. Based on the after-field survey, he had at least taken out half of the Covenant during that fight. He heard Carter sigh.

"_You're in a team, __**Six â€""**_ _a pack. _And I won't repeat myself again; _that lone wolf stuff stays behind. Clear?_"

Jorge shifted in his seat, noticing the huge wave of tension that had swallowed the other two into secrecy. Noble Five was no ignorant fool â€" he knew that they were currently conversing in a private COM. And as to what the current subject was, he suspected it to be about Six's sudden disappearance in the field. In Jorge's mind, he saw no issue with Six's momentary departure; as long as he was killing the bastards and returned in the end, he was fine.

Six looked up from the floor: "Understood, sir." His visor met Noble One's visor, and if he could have taken it off, Six probably would have been staring into some cold, cynical eyes. The said Noble finally broke the contest between him and the new recruit. Instead, he payed attention to the rising scenery secluded in a sea of fog. Once they were close enough, the bitter vapor seeped into the ventilators of their helmets; Carter shrugged it off; Jorge grumbled about it, and Six just reluctantly breathed it in.

"_Kat, how are we doing over there?" _The dense fog was tampering with everyone's vision.

"_We're out the relay outpost now, Commander."_

"_And we could use some help," _Emile's disgruntled voice cut in. _"The local animals are going into a frenzy."_ The sarcasm was heavily thick on his last sentence.

"_Door's locked," _Kat continued, seemingly ignoring the sudden intrusion on their conversation. _"Mechanism's been damaged."

—

Carter remained silent for a grim second: "Alright, we're going to your location. Won't be too long now. Pilot? Drop us in there."

Six could sense the hesitation and fear riddled into the man's voice: "LZ's a little bit _too _hot, sir."

Carter would have none of it: "We know. Put her down, pilot," next, he looked over at Six. He said the next set of words slowly and with authority. "Break time is over, Six."

"_Gaarghhh!"_

"Understood, _Commander_" said Six, lowering the magnum he used. Carter briefly looked at the dead, suicide Grunt before heading into the firefight zone; Jorge bumped shoulders with him, and after that, Six was left alone.

The said Spartan quietly took this time to renew his weaponry with the Falcon's on-board supply. He grabbed a new magnum and DMR, stocked up on some grenades, and then bid the pilot farewell; the bird enthusiastically freed itself from its dangerous cage.

"Everyone, clear the field." Carter commanded through the ruckus.

Six didn't need to be told twice.

He stealthily ran over to a group of huddled Jackals and pierced their heads with his gun, but the element of surprise only lasted for three of them as the last one " startled and angry, jumped around and hissed at him. Six grimaced at missing the opportune moment to kill it, but was swayed from his thoughts as something clung onto his neck. Six sharply turned and slammed whatever thing on his back against a steel column. It baffled him that something had successfully managed to sneak around his back, but that dumbfounded feeling dispersed as he set his eyes on the mangy group of Grunts. He kicked one out of the way as the rest unleashed fire on him.

Six's shields were all but enough to protect him from their fire as he mercilessly beat them dead. Although, as he was too busy infatuating himself with the easy disposal of them, a lone Skirmisher took sight of this scene. It took the chance and luck it had, and sprinted over to Six's back.

Its hope of assassinating him were purged as something lodged into its midsection. Its head swiveled around to see a grinning mask of death. It let out a squawk of stubbornness as it tried to fight the new threat back; Emile made its death come quicker because of this.

"_Dropships!" _

Six's head shot up as an immense amount of heat almost obliterated his arm off. His eyes darted towards the next round of plasma before he tackled Emile down. The said man tried to struggle and question Six's actions, but Six didn't spare him the time. He hooked a hand around Emile's wrist before flinging him and the other Spartan to cover; they only came out once the dropships' engines could no longer be heard.

"Don't _ever _do that again." Emile snapped, briskly getting to his feet. He grabbed his disposed shotgun and entered battle, leaving Six to mull over his words.

I'll take that as a thanks, he decided, and equally joined the fight. He pushed a falling corpse out of his way as he launched a stream of bullets at an Elite's body. Its shields went down, and Emile only had to shoot in the head for it to die.

"_Almost..."_

Six visibly glared at the Elite in front of him. His eyes were wary with the energy sword it had on its hip, but Six didn't let that on as he grabbed for his DMR and a plasma grenade.

"_...there..."_

With an abrupt roar, the Elite charged at Six, its head swinging into full action; as if ready to rip Six's own head off. Six refrained from letting his mind wander and create a snark comment as he opened fire on the running alien.

"_Got it!"_

Six barely dodged the glowing weapon as he side-stepped behind the Elite.

"_...everyone, get in!"_

From his side view, Six could only watch as the others ran for the cover the outpost produced. He gritted his teeth as he dodged another swing of the sword. There were others now, other Covenant, lurking in the shadows " ready to kill him.

"_Six!" _

Carter's voice, Six learned, was becoming a nuisance in these situations. So with a firm grip, Six jumped back as far as he could and threw the plasma grenade at the Elite. It happily latched onto its creators' kind and ticked the final seconds it would have before it would explode.

Marking that contact neutralized, Six turned to the gathering crowd of Covenant. His eyes barely flickered on each of their faces, but remained hardened on the charged guns. Those things were going to cause him huge trouble if he got hit two times.

Side-stepping the Elite again, Six sprung into a run as he made a dash for the outpost. Two hands instinctively reached out and pulled him in before the door completely closed; locking them away from hostile activity.

"You good?" asked Emile.

Six's face turned grim as he leaned against an adjacent wall. He had gotten hit once, and even after he dodged the other would-be-fatal-shot, plasma had burnt through some of his armor; he carefully watched as Kat sauntered up to him, inspecting his condition.

"Turn around." she commanded.

He did.

"You have a hole in your bicep's armor," she pointed out. "It's minor, but it will need patching. I suspect you have burns?" she asked.

Six shrugged. "Burns, bruises, and possibly fractured bones." he said nonchalantly. He could just picture Kat raised an eyebrow at this revelation.

"Can you still operate?"

He nodded his head.

"Then you'll survive." and with that, she briskly walked over to Carter to fill him over with some data. Six caught the Commander's gaze, although it was hidden, but he was sure he had been taking his words seriously and to heart. He could hardly wait for his next lecture about being careful.

But he wasn't complaining, no. Six planned to stand his ground and prove to Carter that he couple operate in a team, _and _be careful at the same time.

* * *

><p>Note:

I'd just like to thank those who have reviewed/commented so far.

Your words are truly reassuring and very...helpful. It makes me

think that people actually like this and inspires me to write more.

_So thanks, guys. _

You know who you are.

Cheers,

FTAaee

4. When Summer Falls

Biofoam.

It was a peculiar little invention meant to prolong the life of a soldier on the field. Many complained for its painful bite, but most swallowed the pesky side affect and continued fighting on the front lines. The foam specialized in numbing the pain and stopping the bleeding of the wound. It can petrify the feeling of affliction a soldier has for an extended amount of time " but if ignored for too long, could provide an infection instead.

Six was well acquainted with the so-called biofoam as he had often used them as guns. To say that its injection wasn't painful would be a lie " but it was also becoming a slow comfort to him. If he wanted to, he could recall every moment he had used it to save his life. But Six did not have the luxury of time to reminisce; only war awaited him.

"Commander says it's time to go, Six." announced Four. He towered over Six like a giant in his current poise. The skeleton imprinted on the man's EVA helmet also assisted in adding an air of intimidation to him; Six remained unfazed.

The said Spartan quickly rose to his feet with a feline's grace as he threw the empty bottle of biofoam at the ground. Grabbing his gauntlet, Six covered up his hand and arm; "I'm moving." he mumbled, walking past the other Spartan.

_But for how long? _Emile scoffed in his head. He stared at the bottle of biofoam with aversion. For a soldier to use the whole thing...Noble Four wondered just how deep and wide the shot was. Although, he did not linger on the curiosity and shoved the emotion away. He turned from his spot and watched as the rest of the team conversed quietly to themselves.

"Alright, let's move out," Carter ordered, breaking his conversation with Kat. The doors hissed open as a dull light crept out of the entrance; it was still too dark. A spark of adrenaline lit up in Emile. Whenever you have damaged lighting meant that you also have a bunch of unwanted personals that had infiltrated the building; all meaning that there were definitely Covenant in the area. Emile was eager at this idea.

"Four?" Carter's voice cut in his thoughts. You stay on guard at the entrance," any hope Emile had of fighting dissipated there. " Two, Five, and Six â€" you're with me. Pull up your night vision and we'll do a quick rundown of the area. After that, well, you know what to do Kat." Noble Two nodded in acknowledgment.

_Just like training, _Six thought as he entered the unknown abyss first. He preformed a quick sweep of his surroundings before deeming it safe enough to wander in with a clouded mind. The others thought differently though and continued to explore the rest of the hallway's twists and turns. It appeared that Kat was the only other one who was influenced with other pressing matters.

"Six?" she called out, stopping him from venturing further into the dark. He turned around and walked back to where she was; and once he was in front of her, she beckoned him into a better lit room; a dead body lay there swimming in its own drying blood. "Search that body." she commanded.

Six did not need to be told twice and quietly visited it. He bent down, momentarily scrunching his face at the stench of the red liquid, and shook off his glove. Next, he turned the body over and let his black-clad hand roam and pat the body for anything worth of interest. He did this with all his focus and was seemingly ignorant to the entrance of the others. If they needed anything else from him, they could just ask â€" or order. Six decided that he was ordered around more often than asked.

Apparently, they thought the same and didn't bother to reference his presence. He or she did their own thing silently except for Carter. He spotted a Marine shuddering at death's door in a corner of the room. He carefully led him to lay against the wall.

"Found anything, Six?" Kat asked, doing her own inspection of the equipment. Six glanced at her position and noticed the status of the

wiring in the room. It was clearly burned. And although Six was no genius with electrical maintenance or computer wiring, he was sure that the whole building's electrical status was almost beyond repair; he shook his head.

"How about you, Kat?" Carter sauntered towards them. His voice was thick and heavy â€" the authority and calm he added to it when he talked to the dying soldier was gone. The woman too, shook her head.

_Well what do you know? _Six thought briefly to himself. Something flew out of the dead man's sleeve and Six picked it up before it could be tainted. He ran his gloved hand over it, removing any dried blood that had stuck onto it before announcing: "I found something."

Kat perked at this. Instantly, she turned about and snatched Six's discovery from his hand. "I'll take it, Six," she said imprudently, as if to apologize for her sudden snapping. Six could have nearly choked at the insincerity her voice held. "Not your domain." she mused, evidently _and_ quickly finding more interest in it.

Six refrained from commenting and stood up as Jorge brought a girl he had scrounged up from some wreckage. "I've got another live one," he announced to them; the girl thrashed in his hold, beating him with her free arm as she yelled at him in a foreign language. "Easy there, we're not going to hurt you." Jorge said placidly. Six watched the girl under a scrutinized gaze as Jorge continued to calm her down â€" it seemed to take forever, but she finally quieted to a respectable degree.

_Hm? _Six looked up, feeling alarmed by the sudden thump he had heard. He glanced around the rest of the room to see if anyone had noticed, but it was apparent that they were all too focused on the civilian. Six uncrossed his arms as one of his hands trailed to his magnum.

"We've been engaged!" Carter shouted as the girl screamed once again. A red Elite appeared from behind Jorge and swung his energy sword at a threatening angle. Six gritted his teeth as he too grabbed his gun and began shooting at the alien. Another person's voice joined the girl's screaming as Six's eyes flickered onto the fatally injured Marine. Six barely had time to notice that his eyes were staring past him as two more zealot-class Elites surged their way into the room. From the corner of his eye, he saw Carter push Kat back as one other trampled Six over.

Six's mind was thrown into a vertiginous course as he caught glimpses of the scene occurring around him. Jorge had taken to shielding the girl whilst two gold Elites made a grab for the man. Six's brain was scattered, but he knew enough to start moving and save the soldier. But as his torso rose, it was brought back down again by the red Elite. Six frowned internally as he swung his fist at its jaw; the Elite's face was thrown to the side, but came back leaning into his helmet. Six could have sworn he would have been able to count the thing's mandibles at this close perspective.

Taking aim, Six pulled back his fist again to hit the alien, but was saved the trouble as a blue armored foot kicked the Elite back. Noble Six did not bother to thank his liberator as he grabbed the assault

rifle nudged to him and sprung to his feet. _"Commander, what's your status?" _Emile's voice fiercely crackled through the COM. Carter had appeared by Six's side and had stopped him from going on a head and killing the trespassing zealots. Six could only wait with a bated breath as his ears trained in on the inhumane screaming. _Why wasn't Carter giving the signal to pursue? Could he _not _see that the man was going to die? _Six's thoughts met their end as the Marine's struggling shouts were silenced.

" - handle her. Five and Six, clear the hole." were the only words he picked up after.

â€|

There was nothing stopping the one-man army; Six held a poker face as he fried the last remaining Covenant in the sector. He pulled back the energy sword he used to murder the Grunt and threw it at its owner feet; Jorge's loud footsteps alerted him back to earth.

"A bit gory, don't you think?" he heard the man inquire. Six turned around and saw that Jorge was gesturing to the dead bodies that surrounded him. Even the floor around Six had been repainted into a purplish green.

Six shrugged: "I do what I need."

"Well," Jorge's tone lightened, finding amusement in the situation. When he told Six to flush the Covenant out, he didn't mean actually mean for Six to take them all alone; Noble Four had been standing at the overlook as backup. "I can see that. Kat wants you to reset a junction here. Think I can let you go without guidance, again?" he mused.

Six grumbled incoherently. Jorge was referencing to the time when a Grunt had conveniently latched itself around Six's head. Its pudgy hands had covered Six's line of vision and he was deemed a blundering idiot. If it weren't for Jorge's 'guidance' on what to do, Six would have perished by the hand of some measly alien. Six reloaded his newly acquired DMR.

Jorge grinned behind his visor: "I'll take that as a yes. Come along now, Six. Kat isn't a patient person."

"Don't I know?" Six mumbled, sauntering into the adjacent room. He easily spotted the junction because of its orange glow and went to finish the task. As he finished resetting it, he could not help but feel as if something was watching him again. Six surveyed the room and found no heat signal or other presence; besides Jorge's pacing shadow, Six knew he was alone.

"_Noble Six reporting: did anyone note what color the Elite Zealot was? The one that tackled me?" _he asked through the open COM.

"_What? You taken a liking to it?" _Six heard Emile rhetorically say. He did not reply to Noble Four's sarcasm.

"_It was red. Why do you ask, Six?" _Carter finally answered. Six strolled back to where Jorge was. He too, was aware of his question, but remained quiet; the two began their trek back to the where the

others were.

Something twisted inside of Six's stomach when he found the words to reply to his commander: _"It wasn't here." _It escaped.

"_Well isn't that wonderful." _Jun commented, also coming to the same realization Six had been dreading.

The two heard Carter sigh in exasperation: _"We'll leave it be for now, but Command might not be happy with this," _there was a pause. "_How long till you two get back, Jorge?" _

The giant beside Six seemed to come back to life: _"In a minute, sir." _

"_Acknowledged. Carter, out." _

The two Spartans slowly awaited the click of the disconnecting COM link before they ascended the few steps leftover for them to walk on. Six took this time to do a short field survey of the massacre they had left in their wake; Grunts were littered around the floor like excess trash whilst Jackals remained pinned to the exact location where Six had left them earlier. Out of all the mess, Six's eyes landed on the damage a lone Elite's fuel rod gun had done. Something deep inside him stirred at the reminder of it still being alive.

"Ready to reacquaint with them, Six?" Jorge asked him. The two super soldiers were now barricading the only entrance to the tech. Room. Six glanced at the rack of guns for a second before walking over to them. In amusement, Jorge watched as the new Spartan of the group refreshed his gun with quick diligence.

Once he was done, Six looked up at the taller Spartan with a nod of his head: "Now I am." he said. Jorge seemed to grin back behind his mask as he set to work on unlatching the deadbolt in front of them; Kat was kneeling down and hard at work when they entered.

_Something is up, _Six thought to himself. He nodded once again at Jorge as he set off to lean against an adjacent wall. Emile was on the opposite side, and together, the two cast off a glaring demeanor in that section of the room. With nothing but the steady sound of his breathing to listen to, Six tuned into the Commander's and Kat's conversation.

"How long?" Carter had asked. He leaned in closer to Kat to see if he could get a better inspection of the damage. He might have not been able to translate its current state with all his knowledge, but he knew that it would take time for it to be repaired " something he did not have right now.

"_Question of my life_," Kat seemed to murmur quite audibly. She waved a hand at the entire console. "If the question is how long it will take for the entire station to go back online, two weeks at the most. This," she sighed. "is_ plasma _damage."

"Even two minutes would be too long," Carter said wearily; he leaned back a bit, but not enough for there to be a considerable amount of distance change to be noticed between the two. "We need to make contact with Holland, _now." _he clarified.

Kat was anticipating this answer; she shot him a condescending look and equally replied to him in her own brisk manner: "_Which," _she appeared to counteract, "is why I'm splicing into the main overland bundle to get you a direct link up to the Colonel." she said, and added almost contrastingly: "You're in my light, Commander."

At this, Carter wisely backed off in unison with Six's vanishing attention. His thoughts, since he had been deployed to Team Noble, had been distracting him and rendering his performance sloppy. It was unlike of Six, and he wondered if he should check himself into a mental evaluation exam. But then...Noble Team might be looked down upon for having acquired a dysfunctional member. _No. _Six refused for that to happen and decided if things really did get bad with his mind â€" then he'd bring it up with the Commander himself.

"_...I'm sorry." _Six's head snapped back to the giant Spartan-II as he interacted with the civilian girl. He didn't pick up the girl's reply as the Spartan in front of him finally noticed that he had returned from the clouds.

"Big man forgets what he is sometimes." Emile informed Six. The Noble sneered over at Five as the Spartan leaned in heavily against him.

"She just lost her father." he said in a warning tone. Six was a bit soft from the lack of action, and briefly suspected that the two might emerge into a fight with one another; none came as Jorge sauntered away. Six's fellow comrade scoffed in good riddance.

"She's going to need a full psychiatric examination, sir." Jorge told Carter.

Emile nodded at this: "She's not the _only _one." he mumbled, loud enough for the ears of a Spartan to hear.

Jorge's head turned to him at a frightening speed, but before he could utter anything in reply, Carter cut him to it: "Lock it down. Both of you," and in a quieter tone he added. "Evac's here, take her away, but the body stays behind." Jorge nodded reapprovingly and made his way back to _Sara. _

"Got it." Kat suddenly proclaimed. She rose to her feet and glanced at Carter briefly. Six and the others took this as a sign to move out. "The signal's patchy but its there," her head tilted at Carter at an almost teasing manner. "Be careful, Commander. You don't want to ground this place like you did last time."

Commander seemed to grin back at her: "I'll keep that in mind, Kat."

Six lingered by the doorway for Kat; he didn't know why, but he found their exchange intriguing. Inside TEAM COM, a private one opened and linked to him.

"_You got a question, Six?" _she asked.

Six paused. In reality, he did have one. He wanted to ask why she and the Commander kidded around so easily in such a hot zone, but didn't

think it would be right to inform her that he had been listening in on them; so he shook his head, as Noble One and Holland filled in the silent gap between him and Kat.

"_What did you say, Noble? The Covenant?"_

There was a short pause â€" one only a Spartan would recognize, before Carter confirmed the Colonel's questions. Six heard the man sigh, and in suddenly weary voice, say:

"_May God help us all." _

Six resisted the urge to scoff at that. God? What _god? _He had been through countless battles where hopes were raised, but only to be crushed; where children died in their parents arms and vice versa; where worlds that used to overflow with life â€" now represented giant graves. If there ever was a god or gods, they were sure doing a spectacular job on keeping what they created alive.

End
file.